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THE GENESIS OF A COMPOSITE

The Codicology of AM 239 fol.

Detailed codicological analysis plays a vital role in fully understanding the production history, or genesis, of a manuscript.¹ This holds true for all manuscripts but seems of particular importance when dealing with a composite book, containing different units, such as AM 239 fol. This late-fourteenth-century codex moreover plays a key role among its contemporaries, as its earliest provenance is documented. The entire group of the so-called “Helgafell-manuscripts,” which includes prominent manuscripts such as AM 350 fol. *Skarðsbók Jónsbókar*, owes its name and possible location of origin to this codex.

An ownership note from around 1400 at the top of fol. 1r connects the manuscript AM 239 fol. to Helgafell (see image 1): “... at helga felle a bok þessa”.² Ólafur Halldórsson hypothesized that the illegible part once read “klaustrit” and that this book was the property of the Augustinian house at Helgafell on Snæfellsnes in west Iceland.³ This theory was and is widely accepted. In his *Helgafellsbækur fornar* (1966), Ólafur grouped several manuscripts together, based on the hands of what he considered to be two fourteenth-century scribes (hereafter called H1 and H2 according to Ólafur’s division), and argued that they were most likely produced at the religious house.⁴ AM 239 fol., which is in part written by H1, is of

1 The present article is a result of the research conducted within the research project “Bókagerð í Helgafellsklaustri á fjórtánda öld” led by Beeke Stegmann and funded by RÍM, and part of my doctoral project “Book Making in Late-Fourteenth-Century Iceland. A Codicological Study in the European Context,” funded by the Icelandic research fund RANNÍS, grant no.: 228433-051. I want to thank Beeke Stegmann, Elizabeth Walgenbach and Svanhildur Óskarsdóttir as well as the two anonymous reviewers for their helpful comments and suggestions.

2 Ólafur Halldórsson, *Helgafellsbækur fornar*, *Studia Islandica* 24 (Reykjavík: Heimspékideild Háskóla Íslands og Bókautgáfa Menningarsjóðs, 1966), 40.

3 *Ibid.*, 40.

4 An overview of the manuscripts attributed to this group can be found on the Helgafell-

particular importance for this grouping: on the one hand, the ownership note allows the localization around 1400 of this book and potentially other books that were written by this scribe; on the other hand, the manuscript's first text, *Tveggja postula saga Jóns ok Jakobs*, written by H1, was copied (at least) twice by scribe H2. These copies are preserved and today stored under the shelfmarks AM 653 a 4to (with JS fragm. 7) and SÁM 1. The fact that H2 copied the first text in AM 239 fol. several times could imply that H2 had access to H1's writing and might have worked at the same location, presumably Helgafell.

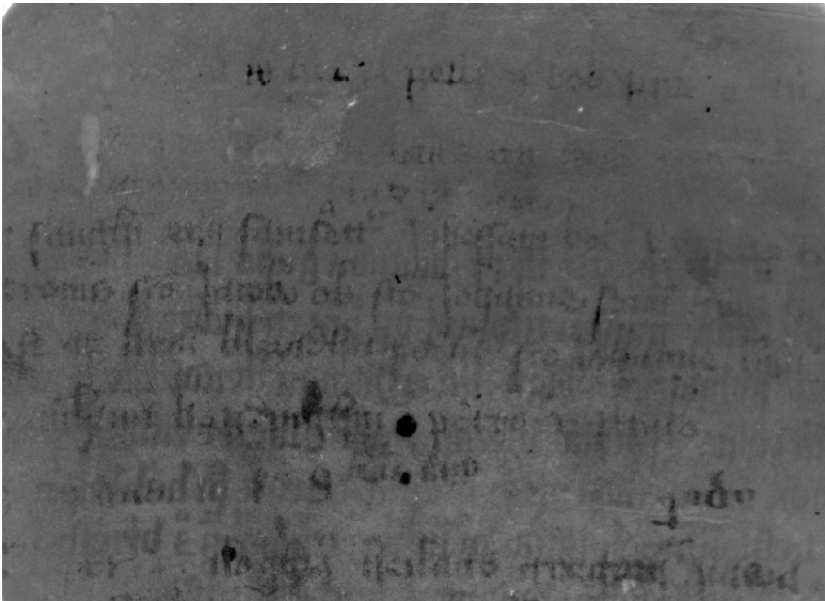


Image 1: Ownership note and table of contents on fol. 1r. AM 239 fol. Image taken by Beeke Stegmann with a multispectral scanner, reproduced with permission.

project website: <https://hirslan.arnastofnun.is/>. For a paleographical description on H1, see in particular Stefán Karlsson, *Sagas of Icelandic Bishops: Fragments of Eight Manuscripts*, Early Icelandic Manuscripts in Facsimile 7 (Copenhagen: Rosenkilde og Bagger, 1967). New linguistic and paleographical analysis indicates that the current attribution of manuscripts to this particular scribe needs to be revised. For an in-depth discussion on a new division, see the contributions of Katrín Lísa van der Linde Mikaelsdóttir and Haraldur Bernharðsson in the proceedings of the Helgafell symposium held on 3 and 4 March 2023 (forthcoming). According to their new scribal division, scribe H1 in AM 239 fol. would correspond to H1.A. On scribe H2, see Haraldur Bernharðsson, "Skrifari Skarðsbókar

AM 239 fol. was recently described as a composite manuscript, consisting of two fourteenth-century “production units” based on the division of the two main scribal hands.⁵ According to this description by Stefan Drechsler, the first unit extends from fols. 1r to 35v and is written by one hand (H1). The second unit is written by another unidentified hand (hereafter H3) and has been said to extend from fols. 36r to 85v and again from fols. 96r to 109v.⁶ The hypothesized two production units were furthermore presented as “most likely written together, indicating that, in the fourteenth century, it was common practice to produce composite manuscripts at Helgafell.”⁷ This presumption draws support from a table of contents on fol. 1r, which lists four of the five texts that are still contained in the manuscript today. Like the note of ownership on 1r, this table of contents is partially illegible due to the worn state of the page. It names *Tveggja postula saga Jóns ok Jakobs*, *Jóns saga baptista*, *Péturs saga postula* and *Viðræður Gregoríusar* (Dialogues of Pope Gregory); *Andrés saga postula* cannot be read here.⁸

This article suggests that the proposed division into two units deserves to be revisited. The present codicological study indicates that AM 239 fol. consists of not two but rather three major production units from the late fourteenth century, as well as several younger ones. Through detailed qualitative analysis, not only of the paleography but also of other book-production features, these three production units and their relationship to one another become apparent, giving a comprehensive understanding of the manuscript’s genesis and its use as exemplar.

postulasagna. Nokkrar athuganir á skriftarþróun,” in *Handritasýrpa: rit til heiðurs Sigurgeiri Steingrímssyni sjötugum 2. október 2013*, ed. Rósa Þorsteinsdóttir, Rit 88 Stofnun Árna Magnússonar á Íslandi (Reykjavík: Stofnun Árna Magnússonar í íslenskum fræðum, 2014), 203–22.

- 5 Stefan Drechsler, *Illuminated Manuscript Production in Medieval Iceland Literary and Artistic Activities of the Monastery at Helgafell in the Fourteenth Century* (Turnhout, Belgium: Brepols, 2021), 116–17. The division of scribal hands is based on earlier research by Ólafur Halldórsson 1966 and Stefán Karlsson 1967.
- 6 Fols. 86r–95v are a later paper addition from the seventeenth century, written by Magnús Jónsson í Vigur and supplementing the lost end of *Péturs saga postula*, as will be discussed below.
- 7 Drechsler, *Illuminated Manuscript Production*, 117.
- 8 For a discussion on the relationship between the ownership note and the tables of content, as well as its dating, see below.

Introduction to AM 239 fol.

Before diving into the methodology and codicological description of the individual production units, a few words on some basic aspects of AM 239 fol. should be provided. AM 239 fol. consists of 109 leaves in its present state and contains five texts: *Tveggja postula saga Jóns ok Jakobs* (fols. 1v–35v), *Jóns saga baptista* (fols. 36r–52v15), *Pétrs saga postula* (52v15–95v), *Andrés saga postula* (96r–101v) and the Dialogues of Pope Gregory, *Viðráður Gregoríusar* (fols. 101v–109v). The manuscript is paginated, but a large number of leaves went missing from the first half of the manuscript before the pages were numbered.⁹ Two sets of comments in the lower margins document approximately how many leaves are missing, one of them referencing the shelfmarks of Árne Magnússon's copies of SÁM 1.¹⁰ The current collation contains fifteen gatherings (see figure 1).¹¹ The ownership note on fol. 1r connects AM 239 fol. to Helgafell on the Snæfellsnes peninsula in West Iceland as early as the beginning of the fifteenth century. The manuscript's provenance is again documented from the seventeenth century onwards on note slips written by Árne Magnússon, so-called AM slips. It appears that the codex was located in the Westfjords of Iceland for a considerable period of time.¹² According to Árne Magnússon's notes, Magnús Jónsson í Vigur (1637–1702) received the manuscript from Magnús Magnússon and passed it on to Páll Jónsson.¹³ Magnús Jónsson í Vigur added a paper gathering to the manuscript, supplying the missing part of *Pétrs saga postula* (see figure 1, quire XIII).¹⁴

9 For further information of the lacunae in AM 239 fol., see table 1 below and footnote 9.

10 According to the marginalia, the following leaves are missing: two leaves missing after fol. 2; one leaf missing after fol. 4; ca. twenty leaves missing after fol. 20; one leaf missing after fol. 29; one leaf missing after fol. 33; ca. seven leaves missing after fol. 35 (potentially six containing the end of *Tveggja postula saga Jóns ok Jakobs* and one containing the beginning of *Jóns saga baptista*); two leaves missing after fol. 36; two leaves missing after fol. 37; ca. six after fol. 38; one leaf missing after fol. 44; one leaf missing after fol. 45; end of *Pétrs saga postula* missing – supplied by paper addition; one leaf missing after fol. 103; end of *Viðráður Gregoríusar* missing after fol. 109.

11 The terms “gathering” and “quire” are used interchangeably in this article. A gathering of four bifolia will be referred to as “quaternion.”

12 Ólafur Halldórsson, *Helgafellsbækur fornar*, 40.

13 AM 239 fol., fylgigögn 3rv and fylgigögn 4rv.

14 Árne Magnússon identifies the scribe on the first AM-slip. See also Kristian Kålund,

Apart from Drechsler's recent study, previous research on AM 239 fol. does not explicitly account for any codicological division within the manuscript. Ólafur Halldórsson states that the fourteenth-century leaves of the manuscript were written by two scribes but does not divide the codex further.¹⁵ Stefán Karlsson only remarks that fols. 1 to 35 were written by one scribe,¹⁶ whom C. R. Unger has identified as the same hand as in AM 226 fol.¹⁷ Kristian Kålund lists AM 239 fol. as one entity from the second half of the fourteenth century and states that it contains "forskellige hænder."¹⁸ These discussions focus on the paleography rather than the codicology. In her art historic study from 2009, Lena Liepe also treats the manuscript as one entity; however, she points out that the pen-flourishing changes from fol. 36r onwards.¹⁹

Katalog over Den Arnamagnæanske Håndskriftsamling Udgivet Af Kommissionen for Det Arnamagnæanske Legat, vol. 1 (Copenhagen: Gyldendal, 1889), 207.

15 Ólafur Halldórsson, *Helgafellsbækur fornar*, 48.

16 Stefán Karlsson, *Sagas of Icelandic Bishops*, 20–21.

17 Carl Richard Unger, ed., *Postola Sögur: Legendariske Fortællinger Om Apostlernes Liv, Deres Kamp for Kristendommens Udbredelse Samt Deres Martyrdød Efter Gamle Haandskrifter Udgivne Af C.R. Unger* (Christiania, 1874), xii.

18 Kålund, *Katalog over Den Arnamagnæanske Håndskriftsamling*, 1:207.

19 Lena Liepe, *Studies in Icelandic Fourteenth Century Book Painting*, Snorrastofa, rit 6 (Reykholzt: Snorrastofa, Cultural and Medieval Centre, 2009), 163.

QUIRE I			QUIRE II			QUIRE III			QUIRE IV			QUIRE V		
ff	hair or flesh		ff	hair or flesh		ff	hair or flesh		ff	hair or flesh		ff	hair or flesh	
1	R	H	5	R	F	13	R	F	21	R	F	29	R	H
	√	F		√	H		√	H		√	H		√	F
2	R	H	6	R	H	14	R	H	22	R	H	30	R	F
	√	F		√	F		√	F		√	F		√	H
3	R	F	7	R	H	15	R	F	23	R	F	31	√	H
	√	H		√	H		√	H		√	H		√	F
4	R	H	8	R	F	16	R	F	24	R	H	32	√	H
	√	F		√	F		√	F		√	F		√	H
			9	R	F	17	R	F	25	R	F	33	R	H
				√	H		√	H		√	H		√	F
			10	R	H	18	R	H	26	R	H	34	R	F
				√	F		√	F		√	F		√	H
			11	R	H	19	R	F	27	√	H			
				√	H		√	H				35	R	F
			12	R	F	20	R	F	28	√	F		√	H
				√	F		√	F						
QUIRE VI			QUIRE VII			QUIRE VIII			QUIRE IX			QUIRE X		
ff	hair or flesh		ff	hair or flesh		ff	hair or flesh		ff	hair or flesh		ff	hair or flesh	
36	R	F	38	R	F	46	R	F	54	R	F	62	R	F
	√	H		√	H		√	H		√	H		√	F
37	R	H	39	R	F	47	R	F	55	R	H	63	R	H
	√	F		√	F		√	F		√	F		√	H
			40	R	H	48	R	F	56	√	H	64	√	F
				√	H		√	F		√	H		√	H
			41	R	H	49	R	H	57	R	H	65	R	F
				√	F		√	H		√	F		√	H
			42	R	F	50	√	F	58	R	F	66	R	H
				√	H		√	H		√	H		√	F
			43	R	F	51	R	F	59	√	F	67	R	F
				√	H		√	F		√	F		√	H
			44	√	H	52	R	H	60	R	F	68	√	F
				√	F		√	H		√	H		√	H
			45	R	H	53	√	F	61	R	H	69	√	F
				√	F		√	F		√	F		√	H
QUIRE XI			QUIRE XII			QUIRE XIII			QUIRE XIV			QUIRE XV		
ff	hair or flesh		ff	hair or flesh		ff	hair or flesh		ff	hair or flesh		ff	hair or flesh	
70	R	F	78	R	F	86	R	F	96	R	F	104	R	H
	√	H		√	H		√	H		√	H		√	F
71	R	H	79	R	H	87	R	H	97	R	H	105	√	H
	√	F		√	F		√	F		√	F		√	H
72	R	F	80	√	H	88	√	H	98	R	F	106	√	F
	√	H		√	H		√	H		√	H		√	H
73	R	H	81	R	F	89	R	F	99	R	H	107	√	F
	√	F		√	F		√	F		√	F		√	H
74	R	F	82	√	H	90	R	F	100	√	H	108	√	F
	√	H		√	H		√	H		√	H		√	F
75	R	H	83	R	F	91	√	F	101	R	H	109	R	F
	√	F		√	F		√	F		√	F		√	H
76	R	F	84	√	H	92	R	F	102	R	F			
	√	H		√	H		√	H		√	H			
77	R	H	85	R	F	93	√	F	103	√	F			
	√	F		√	F		√	F		√	F			
						94	R	√						
						95	√	F						

Figure 1: The current collation of AM 239 fol. In collaboration with Vasare Rastonis.

Methodology

To better understand the genesis of a given codex, codicologists have developed a method to systematically analyze its production units.²⁰ The term “production unit” (PU) describes an entity of a manuscript that was produced as a continuous body of work without visible breaks or discontinuities.²¹ Production units are identified through the systematic analysis of a codex, and while scribal hands are an important aspect, other production features such as the collation, pricking and ruling must also be considered in order to capture the full picture. Changes in production methods are of particular importance, especially when several occur simultaneously in the same location, as such breaks can indicate a new production unit.

In their book *La syntaxe du codex* (2013), Patrick Andrist, Paul Canart and Marilena Maniaci classify different types of production units: the first and most basic production unit is independent from others in both its material and content (a production unit MC). The second type of production unit adds content to an already-existing unit without adding any form of material support (a production unit C). The third type of production unit adds content to an already-existing unit, while also adding more material (a production unit C-MC). The aim of the syntactical description of a manuscript is

[...] to reconstruct, as far as reasonably possible, the probable stages of the history of this codex by analysing the types of its production units, even when we cannot assign a date to the material support or the writing.²²

- 20 The term “production unit” was originally coined by Erik Kwakkel, see Erik Kwakkel, “Towards a Terminology for the Analysis of Composite Manuscripts,” *Gazette du livre médiéval* 41 (Autumn 2002): 12–19. Other terms for entities in manuscripts include “booklet,” see Pamela Robinson, “The ‘Booklet’. A Self-Contained Unit in Composite Manuscripts,” in *Codicologica: Towards a Science of Handwritten Books = Vers Une Science Du Manuscrit = Bausteine Zur Handschriftenkunde*, eds. A. Gruys and J. P. Gumbert, *Litterae Textuales* (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1980), 46–69, and “codicological unit,” see Marilena Maniaci, *Terminologia del libro manoscritto*, Addenda 3 (Roma: Istituto centrale per la patologia del libro, 1996) and Johann Peter Gumbert, “Codicological Units: Towards a Terminology for the Stratigraphy of the Non-Homogeneous Codex,” in *Il codice miscelaneo: tipologie e funzioni; atti del convegno internazionale, Cassino, 14–17 maggio 2003*, eds. Edoardo Crisci and Oronzo Pecere, *Segno e testo* 2 (Cassino: Università degli studi di Cassino, 2004), 17–42.
- 21 Patrick Andrist, Paul Canart, and Marilena Maniaci, *La syntaxe du codex: Essay de codicologie structurale*, *Bibliologia*, volume 34 (Turnhout: Brepols, 2013), 8.
- 22 Patrick Andrist and Marilena Maniaci, “New (and Renewed) Resources in the Field of

The codicological analysis of AM 239 fol. presented below was conducted following this type of syntactical description. By applying a qualitative approach, all 109 leaves of AM 239 fol. were researched both from digital images and through in-situ analysis. The information gathered includes the type of writing support, gathering sizes and structures, dimensions of the leaves, text block and margins, pricking marks and ruling marks, colors used for the illuminations, the presence or absence of rubrics, information about the scribe(s), and contemporary and later corrections and additions. In the following analysis, the characteristics of the individual production units will be presented in this order.

Additional data was provided through pigment analysis performed by Prof. Maurizio Aceto and Prof. Angelo Agostino, who performed FORS (Fiber Optic Reflectance Spectroscopy) and XRF (X-Ray Fluorescence) on selected initials contained in the manuscript at the Stofnun Árna Magnússonar í íslenskum fræðum in Reykjavík in August 2021. Both techniques are non-invasive and state-of-the-art methods used for the identification of pigments and dyestuffs.

Codicological description

In the following analysis, the major production units dated to the late fourteenth century are described in detail. The discussion of codicological details underlines that these three units are, in fact, the products of separate projects.

The first production unit (PU1)

PU1 begins on fol. 1 and ends with fol. 35v, which corresponds to the previously suggested division by Drechsler. Fol. 1r was originally left blank, a copy of *Tveggja postula saga Jóns ok Jakobs*, begins on fol. 1v. There are several lacunae within PU1, and fol. 35v does not coincide with the end of the saga. After this leaf, another lacuna occurs. Therefore, in its present form, the first production unit contains only one text, *Tveggja postula saga Jóns ok Jakobs*, which is not preserved in its entirety. According to the previously mentioned marginalia, there are at least forty-five leaves (or ninety pages)

Manuscript Description (the ‘Syntaxe Du Codex’ and More...),” *Comparative Oriental Manuscript Studies Bulletin* 2.1–2 (2016): 75.

missing from the manuscript,²³ thirty-one of them from PU1, meaning that this production unit was once at least twice the size that it is today.²⁴

The codicological aspects of PU1 seem to have set the tone for all the following production units. The properties of the writing support of PU1 can be characterized as follows: The writing support is vellum (calf skin), as is visible from the hair follicles. In its current form, PU1 consists of a defective quire, currently consisting of two bifolia (I¹⁻⁴), three intact gatherings made of four bifolia (II⁵⁻¹², III¹³⁻²⁰, IV²¹⁻²⁸), a defective gathering made of three bifolia (V²⁹⁻³⁴), and a singleton (fol. 35) (see figure 1 for the current collation). The gatherings that are preserved in their full size (gatherings II, III and IV) adhere to Gregory's rule, meaning that hair-sides face hair-sides within an opening, following the continental-European fashion of constructing quires.²⁵ The leaves measure 287x200 mm on average.

Other codicological features that shape the appearance of PU1 include the mise-en-page, in that the layout of the pages is rather homogeneous. The average text block size of 205x146 mm is arranged in one column per page throughout. The line count, however, varies. The first page, fol. 1v, counts 33 lines to the column. Fol. 2r counts only 28 lines, before immediately returning to 33 lines on fol. 2v. The line count stays stable until fol. 13v, from whence 32 lines are written per page, until 35v. PU1 was pricked with a tool that left slit-like marks, probably a knife (see image 2). On fols. 5–12, x-like pricking marks can be observed alongside slits (see image 3). This shape might be the result of double pricking whereby the knife was held at different angles.²⁶ The ruling in PU1 appears to be lead ruling, as

23 Excluding the unknown number of leaves missing between fols. 85 and 96 and the lost end of *Viðráður Gregoriusar*.

24 At present it cannot be ruled out that PU1 contained further texts, especially when considering that the table of contents is not legible in its entirety.

25 On Gregory's rule, see for instance Frank M. Bischoff, "Pergamentdicke und Lagenordnung. Beobachtungen zur Herstellungstechnik Helmarshausener Evangeliare des 11. und 12. Jahrhunderts," in *Pergament: Geschichte, Struktur, Restaurierung, Herstellung*, ed. Peter Rück, Historische Hilfswissenschaften, Bd. 2 (Sigmaringen: J. Thorbecke, 1991), 99.

26 In her BA thesis, Björk Þorleifsdóttir remarks: "Krossinn er bara notaður til að merkja fyrir spássium." Björk Þorleifsdóttir, *Af bókfelli: Smásjárathuganir á íslenskum skinnhandritum* (Reykjavík, 2003), 47. This could imply that different tools were used to indicate different boundaries and lines. A wider comparison of the use of pricking tools is currently in progress and will be considered in a forthcoming publication concerning late-fourteenth-century manuscript production.

marks on fols. 5r, 12v and 33r indicate. Elsewhere in this unit, there are ruling marks that appear as if they were done with a blunt instrument, e.g. on fol. 28r. At present, no definite explanation can be given for this discrepancy, as studies of the potential fading of lead ruling are wanting.



Images 2 and 3: Pricking in the form of a slit (left) and an x (right) as seen from fol. 6r. AM 239 fol. Photo: Sigurður Stefán Jónsson, reproduced with permission.

PU1 is illuminated with colored initials that feature pen-flourishing. The initials are mostly done in dark red and a greenish color that appears turquoise at times.²⁷ The exception is the only historiated initial, on fol. 2v, where white and black were used in addition to these two colors. Chemical analysis has identified red ochre, green earth and white lead as pigments used for the colored initials in PU1.²⁸ Liepe discusses the possibility that the illuminator in this production unit was the main scribe H1 himself.²⁹ Rubrical spaces are blank throughout this unit – no chapter headings were filled in.

As already mentioned, the writing on these first thirty-five folia has been attributed to H1, a hand identified in several other manuscripts, among them AM 350 fol. and AM 226 fol. There are not many visible cor-

27 For a discussion of the art historic properties of these illuminations, see Liepe, *Studies in Icelandic Fourteenth Century Book Painting*, 163–65.

28 Sampled initials in PU1 are on fols. 13v, 15r, 17v and 21v.

29 Liepe, *Studies in Icelandic Fourteenth Century Book Painting*, 169–70.

rections in PU₁, adding to the impression that this scribe was proficient. In several locations it seems as though H₁ scratched out a mistake and wrote over it. The few interlinear additions in this unit are typically making up for omitted words and use a comma-like insertion character. It appears that these corrections were made by H₁, as indicated by the ductus and color of the ink. A second scribe that has not been mentioned by earlier scholarship can be observed in PU₁, although its contribution is rather short. The latter half of line 6 and all of line 7 on fol. 2r are written in a different, seemingly less skilled hand, which features a much larger script that is placed unevenly on the line (see image 4). This hand does not occur elsewhere in the manuscript and might have belonged to a student or apprentice.

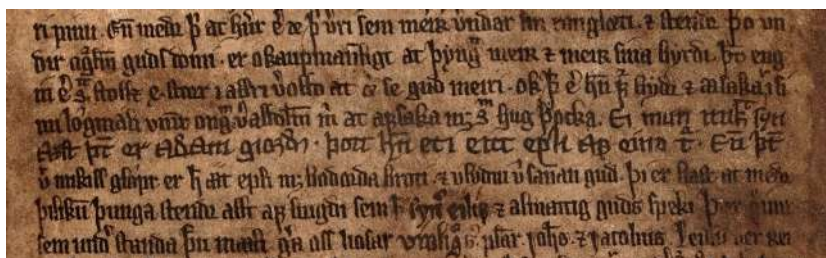


Image 4: The sporadic occurrence of an unknown hand in lines 6 & 7 on fol. 2r in AM 239 fol. Photo: Suzanne Reitz, reproduced with permission.

The second production unit (PU₂)

Previous research suggests that PU₂ begins on fol. 36 and continues until the end of the manuscript on fol. 109 (excluding the seventeenth-century insertion).³⁰ As will be shown, there are strong reasons to argue that the second production unit ends much earlier than previously proposed, namely in the middle of fol. 52v, where the text it preserves, *Jóns saga baptista*, ends. Apart from the change of scribal hands from H₁ to H₃ occurring between fols. 35 and 36 where PU₂ begins, the reasons for arguing for a new production unit starting there are the same ones that suggest that it already ends in the middle of fol. 52v.

The properties of the writing support do not change significantly: Like PU₁, PU₂ is written on vellum. Again, a loss of leaves has occurred, and according to the marginalia, some thirteen leaves are missing throughout

30 Drechsler, *Illuminated Manuscript Production*, 116.

this production unit, amongst others the leaf that contained the beginning to *Jóns saga baptista*.³¹ Today, PU2 consists of two singletons (VI^{36,37}), followed by two quaternions (VII³⁸⁻⁴⁵, VIII⁴⁶⁻⁵³), both of which adhere to Gregory's rule. The average leaf size measures 284x205 mm and is essentially the same size as PU1.

The layout stays a single column, and the text block size remains consistent with PU1, measuring 206x144 mm on average; however, the line count varies significantly (see also table 1 below): fol. 36 counts 34 lines on both sides; fol. 37r changes to 33 lines before immediately returning to 34 lines on fols. 37v–42r. On fol. 42v, the line count increases to 35 lines until fol. 45, where both recto and verso count 34 lines again. After this, the line count decreases to 31 lines until the end of the production unit on fol. 52v, line 15. The pricking marks from fol. 36 until fol. 53 (which is the last leaf of gathering VIII and from a material standpoint still belongs to PU2) show different shapes. There are a few pricking marks on fols. 36–45 that are slits. From fols. 36–41, these slits mark the outer and inner margins of the leaves. The line pricking on these leaves is either round or triangle-like (see image 5). From fol. 42 to fol. 45, the line pricking is both round and slit-like, whereby the slits are especially present in the upper half, and the round holes in the lower half of the pages. From fol. 46 onwards, the pricking shows as round marks. The reason for this mixture of shapes is unknown and does not coincide with any change in ruling, which appears to be made with lead throughout (visible on 45v, for example).



Image 5: Round or triangle-like line pricking as seen in the outer margin of fol. 41r. AM 239 fol. Photo: Sigurður Stefán Jónsson, reproduced with permission.

31 Therefore, it cannot be ruled out that PU2 originally contained other texts written prior to *Jóns saga baptista*.

The colors used for the initials continue to be dark red and greenish turquoise in appearance. As in PU1, pigment analysis has identified the components as red ochre and green earth.³² However, there are some changes concerning the decoration of these initials: the pen-flourishing gets simpler and less professional, and several initials lack it all together.³³ Another change from the previous production unit is that rubrics are present. From fol. 36r onwards, red chapter headings are filled in using a dark red. Whether the red ink used for the rubrics is made of the same composition as the ink used for initials cannot be determined at present.

H3, the main scribe of PU2, is very likely the same person that filled in the rubrics in this unit; both the aspect and ductus of the script are highly similar (see image 6). H3 has not been identified in any other manuscripts so far. The preferred insertion characters used for interlinear corrections are comma- or hook-like strokes, but other larger characters, such as a Ψ on fol. 38r, line 7 or fol. 45v, lines 17 and 22, occur as well. Judging by the large number of corrections made in PU2 and the scribe's slightly irregular ductus, this scribe was less skilled than H1.



Image 6: Rubric and surrounding text, both very likely written by H3.
AM 239 fol., fol. 43r. Photo: Suzanne Reitz, reproduced with permission.

The third production unit (PU3)

A third fourteenth-century production unit (PU3) begins on fol. 52v but has not been previously noticed, probably because no scribal change occurs between PU2 and PU3. Apart from the beginning of a new text, there are several subtle indicators that there is a break between the two units: the

32 Samples were taken from two initials on fol. 38v.

33 Liepe, *Studies in Icelandic Fourteenth Century Book Painting*, 163.

hue of the black ink used for the writing of the main text changes slightly from black to a lighter brownish black. Furthermore, there is a small rubric in line 15 that can easily be overlooked, and not without reason: this little red chapter heading, reading “prologus” and initiating *Pétrs saga postula*, is tucked away at the end of the elongated and stretched “Amen” (see image 7). The rubric is practically invisible on the black-and-white images on the online-depot Digitale Samlinger and does not catch the eye on the colored images supplied on handrit.is, either.³⁴ Upon closer investigation, changes in several other production aspects such as the pricking and color palette become obvious, manifesting a third production unit.

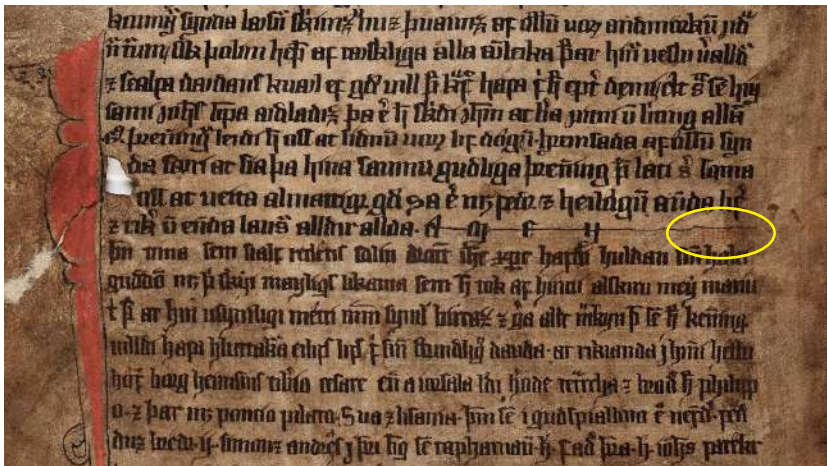


Image 7: Break between PU₂ and PU₃ with rubric in line 15 (circled) on fol. 52v in AM 239 fol. Image: Suzanne Reitz, reproduced with permission.

PU₂ ends in line 15 on fol. 52v. The rest of the leaf, as well as fol. 53, which marks the last leaf of gathering VIII, was originally left blank. Later, when writing the text of the third production unit, H₃ first made use of this free space before adding more writing support, which is also vellum. Thus, PU₃ is a direct material continuation of the previous unit on the very same page. Lacunae occur between fols. 85 and 95, after fol. 103 and again after

34 See <https://sprogsamlinger.ku.dk/q.php?p=ds/hjem/mapper/26477> and <https://handrit.is/manuscript/view/is/AM02-0239/115#page/52v/mode/2up>.

fol. 109. Gatherings are mostly made of 4 bifolia (IX⁵⁴⁻⁶¹, X⁶²⁻⁶⁹, XI⁷⁰⁻⁷⁷, XII⁷⁸⁻⁸⁵, XIV⁹⁶⁻¹⁰³); only the last gathering is a tertion (XV¹⁰⁴⁻¹⁰⁹). Again, most of the quires adhere to Gregory's rule, only gathering X does not follow the method faithfully. The average leaf size is 288x204 mm.

The layout continues to be arranged in one column, but the text block measures 225x150 mm on average and is accordingly approximately 20 mm taller than the text blocks in PU1 and PU2. The line count is, at least at first, more regular than in PU2: fol. 52v is written in 31 lines, as is fol. 53v. Fol. 53r counts 30 lines, and from fol. 54r until 85v, H₃ writes 32 lines per page. After a lacuna (supplemented by the paper addition), the line count decreases to 29 lines on fols. 96r–97v. It increases only slightly at first, with 31 lines on fols. 98r–103v and 33 lines on fol. 104r. Fols. 104v–109v, however, suddenly show 40 lines per page. The end of the last text in PU₃, *Viðræður Gregoriusar*, is defective, but it might be that the scribe only had a limited amount of writing support left at his disposal to conclude the text and therefore started to increase the line count per page drastically.

As previously mentioned, fols. 52 and 53 were pricked together with the rest of gathering VIII and show the same round pricking holes as the other leaves in this gathering. The newly added writing material in PU₃, from gathering IX onward, shows slit-like pricking marks, meaning that the pricking tool was changed from a round to a flat tool between this production unit and the previous one. The line pricking shows a lot of incidences where too many lines were pricked (e.g., fols. 70–77), and the last two quires (fols. 96–106) show three sets of line pricking marks, whereby the outermost pricking seems to have ultimately been used by the scribe (see image 8).³⁵ The ruling in PU₃ seems to be lead ruling (see e.g. marks on fols. 62r and 78r); however, there are also marks that appear more in the style of dry-point ruling (e.g., fol. 72r).

35 Why these gatherings were re-pricked not once but twice remains unknown. The line count indicated by the pricking marks does not vary from one set to the other.

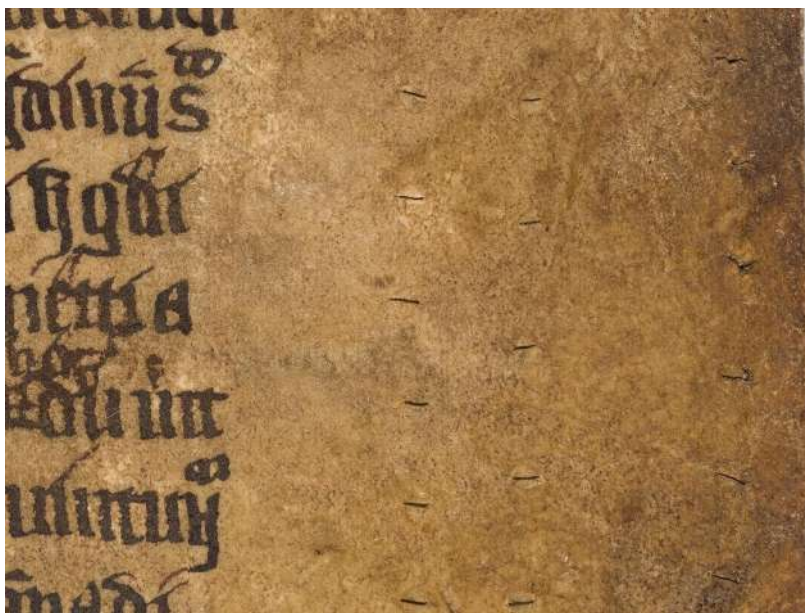


Image 8: Three sets of line pricking as seen from fol. 103r. AM 239 fol.

Photo: Sigurður Stefán Jónsson, reproduced with permission.

On fol. 52v, *Pétrs saga postula* is initiated with a vibrant red I-initial, which has been identified as cinnabar, and features black pen-flourishing drawn with an ink containing iron. Overall, PU₃ contains not only this vibrant red, dark red and a greenish turquoise (the latter two of which were, as in PU₁ and PU₂, identified as red ochre and green earth), but also a darker green containing carbon, and yellow.³⁶ Rubrics continue for the most part to be filled in with a red color, which at times appears slightly lighter or darker.³⁷ One chapter heading on fol. 64r, however, diverges and is written in greenish turquoise. While no pigment analysis has been performed on this heading, the appearance of the color is highly similar to that used for the pen-flourishing for the corresponding S-initial (see image 9). Should the same ink have been used for both the rubric and the pen-flourishing, it

36 No samples were taken from yellow initials, nor was the black used for the pen-flourishing on fol. 52v identified. In PU₃, selected initials on fols. 52v and 53v were researched.

37 An in-depth study on all colored elements in AM 239 fol. will be provided by Giulia Zorzan in the proceedings of the Helgafell-symposium held on 3 and 4 March 2023 (forthcoming).

would suggest that either the rubricator of this section was also responsible for (at least part of) the decoration process or that the rubricator and decorator worked very closely together, to the point that they shared the same ink well. Liepe does not go into detail concerning the pen-flourishing in this part of the manuscript, but it sets itself apart from both PU₁ and PU₂ in that occasionally, simple faces are added to the decoration, similar to those present in AM 156 4to (a *Jónsbók* codex written by H₂). The change in decoration style is an indicator that PU₂ and PU₃ were not illuminated in the same process and might even point to different decorators.

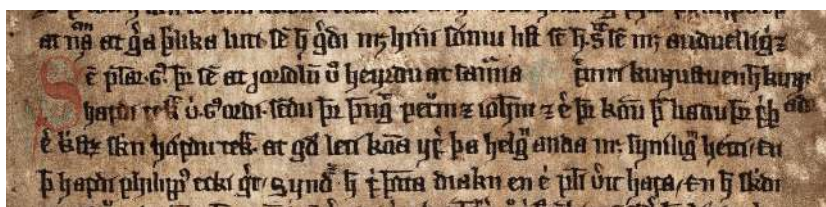
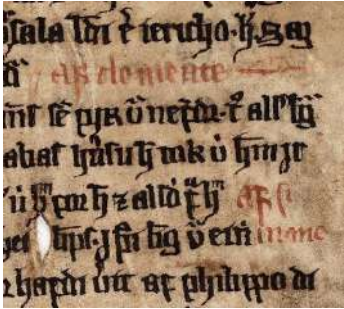


Image 9: Turquoise chapter heading and S-initial with turquoise pen-flourishing on fol. 64r. AM 239 fol. Photo: Suzanne Reitz, reproduced with permission.

As previously remarked, the scribe does not change from PU₂ to PU₃; the main text continues to be the work of H₃. The rubrics might also be ascribed to this hand, although there are certain features that do not quite correspond to the ductus of H₃: there are several rubrics throughout the third production unit that are written in a more swung and less “boxy” ductus, drawing tall f below the base line and closing the loops of insular f (e.g. on fol. 68r, see image 10). Other rubrics, however, show the squarer ductus of H₃, which is present in the rubrics in the previous production unit, featuring the open insular f and boxy letter bodies (e.g. on fol. 68v, see image 11). Another difference between rubrics PU₂ and PU₃ is the use of line fillers. While none are present in PU₂, they occur quite frequently in PU₃. The two “styles” in the rubrics change randomly – no clear pattern emerges that would point towards any clear division of hands. Following these observations, two possibilities arise: either two different people filled in the chapter headings in PU₃, or H₃ used two different ducti during the rubrication process. The turquoise rubric on fol. 64r further suggests that the rubrication process of PU₃ was (at least in part) connected to the decoration, which also changes from PU₂ to PU₃. Corrections continue to

be much more frequent than in H1's writing. Insertion characters do not change from those used in PU2.



Images 10 & 11: Two different styles in the rubrics of PU₃, one featuring insular *f* with closed loops and tall *s* extending below base line (fol. 68r, left) and one showing an open insular *f* and tall *s* standing on the base line (fol. 68v, right).

Photos: Suzanne Reitz, reproduced with permission.

Younger production units

Apart from the three late-fourteenth-century production units, there are several other, younger production units. Most of them provide content but no new writing support to the manuscript, thus qualifying as production units of the C-type. They range from simple pen-trial-like marginalia (e.g. an incomplete alphabet on fols. 21v and 22r), over the added pagination, to the ownership note and table of contents on fol. 1r. Drechsler asserts that the table of contents was “written by the same scribe that wrote the note of ownership.”³⁸ Ólafur Halldórsson (1966) is silent on the relationship between the ownership note and the table of contents and only remarks, that the table of contents was added “síðar.”³⁹ Due to the worn state of the first page, it is difficult to say for certain whether the same hand was at work here, but from the little that is visible, it seems appropriate to at least date the table of contents to a similar time as the ownership note, that is, the beginning of the fifteenth century.

³⁸ Drechsler, *Illuminated Manuscript Production*, 117.

³⁹ Ólafur Halldórsson, *Helgafellsbækur fornar*, 40.

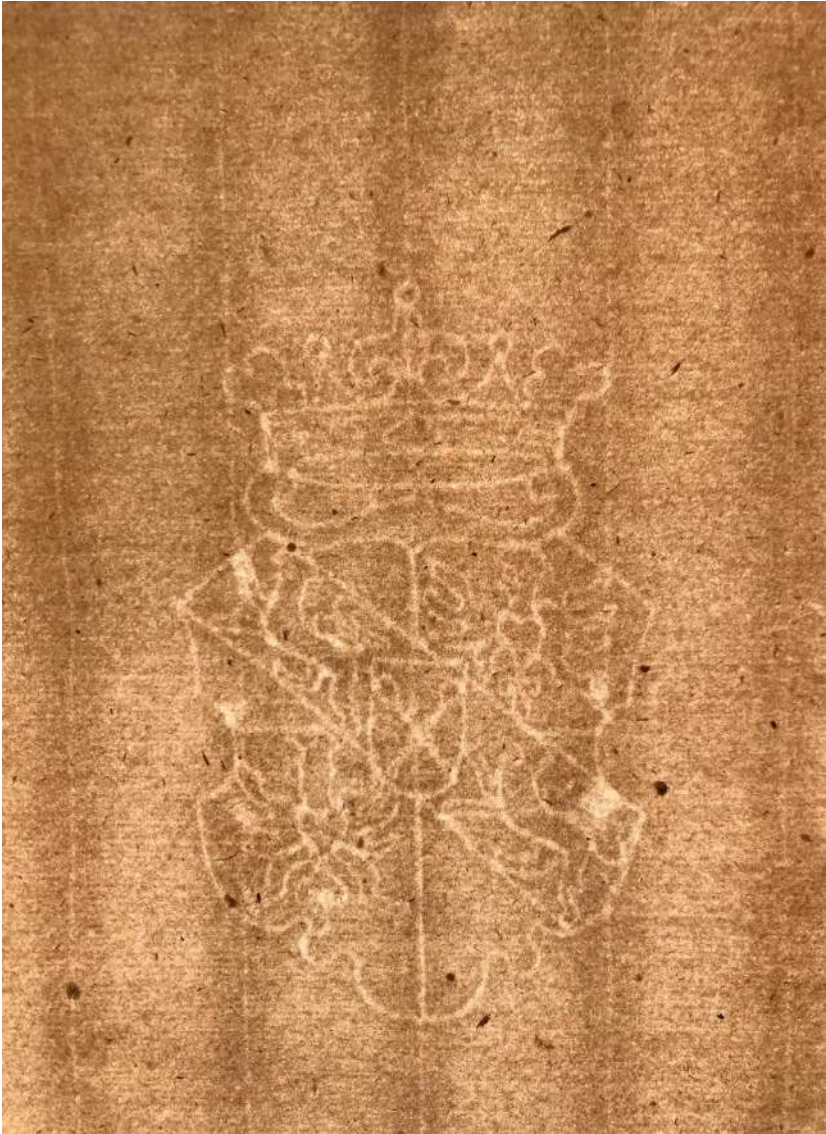
The paper slips added by Árni Magnússon documenting the later provenance of AM 239 fol. can be classified as production units MC, as they are independent from the rest of the manuscript. This also applies to the largest younger production unit, PU4, the supplied ending of *Pétrs saga postula*.

The fourth major production unit contained in AM 239 fol. sets itself clearly apart from the three fourteenth-century units through its writing support: its only quire, XIII, is made of paper. The leaves show a watermark portraying a coat of arms, a crowned shield (see image 12). The main shield is arranged into quarters with an inescutcheon. Fields 2 and 3 show an eagle, while fields 1 and 4 are covered by a bend. In the bend, there are two quadrupeds of what seems like the same species, lifting their right front legs. The inescutcheon shows two slender objects that are crossed, perhaps swords or crosiers. No counter mark is visible.⁴⁰

The leaves are approximately 289x199 mm in size. The text block, which is again arranged in one column, measures 250x170 mm on average, and features 38 lines per page, except for fol. 92r, where 17 lines are written. Leaves 92v–95v are left blank. Neither pricking nor ruling marks are visible. Only in this paper supplement are catch words present. There are no illuminations or otherwise added decorations, and the ink used for the main text is brown. As already mentioned, the scribe of PU4 has been identified as Magnús Jónsson í Vigur in Ísafjarðardjúp. Magnús was a wealthy farmer and learned man, who is renowned for his activity as scribe and collector of manuscripts.⁴¹

⁴⁰ At present, the watermark remains unidentified.

⁴¹ Páll Eggert Ólason, *Íslenskar æviskrár: Frá landnámstímum til ársloka 1940*, vol. 3 (Reykjavík: Hið íslenska bókmenntafélag, 1950), 28–29. For a comprehensive list of Magnús' scribal activities, see for example Jóhann Gunnar Ólafsson, "Magnús Jónsson í Vigur," *Skírnir* 130 (1956): 107–26. For his activities as a patron, see Sheryl McDonald Werronen's project "Icelandic Scribes. Scribal Networks in 17th-Century Iceland: The Patronage of Magnús Jónsson í Vigur": <https://icelandicscribesproject.com/patron/>.



*Image 12: Watermark featuring a coat of arms
on fol. 95. AM 239 fol. Photo: Lea D. Pokorny.*

AM 239 fol.'s genesis

The identification of the three production units from the late fourteenth century is invaluable for understanding the production of AM 239 fol. However, it is the relationship between these three units that truly sheds light on the genesis of this manuscript. The fact that fol. 1r was initially left blank gives reason to believe that fol. 1 was intended to be the first leaf of PU1 (and, consequently, of the manuscript as a whole), as first rectos tend not to carry writing, probably because of the higher exposure to wear and damage.⁴² Due to the lacuna that occurs between fol. 35, the last leaf of PU1, and fol. 36, the first leaf of PU2, it is impossible to define their relationship with any certainty. A closer connection between PU1 and PU2 cannot be ruled out, but it is not possible to determine whether they were written together, since H1 and H3 do not occur on the same leaf or in the same quire. Fols. 35 and 36 are not connected, nor do they mark the actual end or beginning of the texts they encompass. Therefore, it is impossible to say whether the two units were physically connected at some point.

One could argue that PU1 and PU2 are somehow related, as the color scheme and pigments used in these two units are essentially the same. However, the colors alone do not necessarily confirm a closer relationship between PU1 and PU2, as the pigments in question, red ochre and green earth, were widely available, cheap and also used in PU3. Other features point towards a discontinuation between the two first production units: The pen-flourishing changes from fol. 35v to fol. 36r,⁴³ which suggests that not only a change of scribe but also a change of illuminator (likely “*cum ornemaniste*”) occurs at this location. In addition, the sudden presence of rubrics in PU2 indicates that these two sections were not part of the same project and are, therefore, two separate production units. Perhaps PU2 was once connected with PU1 through the writing support, thus fulfilling the criteria for a production unit C-MC, as described above. The dating of

42 Ryan Perry, “The Sum of the Book: Structural Codicology and Medieval Manuscript Culture,” in *The Cambridge Companion to Medieval British Manuscripts*, eds. Orietta Da Rold and Elaine M. Treharne, Cambridge Companions: Literature (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2020), 110. Blank first rectos in Icelandic manuscripts from the fourteenth century can for example be observed in GKS 1005 fol., SÁM 1, AM 61 fol., AM 156 4to and AM 350 fol.

43 Liepe, *Studies in Icelandic Fourteenth Century Book Painting*, 163.

the two units according to the ONP Dictionary of Old Norse Prose, which is based on Kristian Kålund and Stefán Karlsson,⁴⁴ does not shed light on the matter: Stefán Karlsson's narrow dating of fols. 1–35 to the decade 1360–1370 is by no means an absolute one,⁴⁵ and since PU2 and PU3 are dated to the time between 1350 and 1400, all three production units might very well be contemporaries. Thus, in its present state, both PU1 and PU2 are to be treated as production units MC – individual in both their material and content. The relationship between PU2 and PU3 is much easier to define because the break between them is preserved: PU3 was obviously added to the already existing PU2, making use of the empty space on fols. 52v and 53rv and adding new writing support to accommodate the texts. Therefore, PU3 qualifies as a production unit C-MC – adding to the available writing support left blank in the previous unit and adding more material. PU4, as a much later addition, stands separately from the other units as a production unit MC.

One can only speculate about H3's motives for adding more material to the already existing texts. Kathryn M. Rudy discusses possible reasons for users to add to a manuscript in great detail. Examples given are, among others, personalization and newly available texts as possible “forces” that “drove book owners to add texts and images to books that anyone would have considered complete.”⁴⁶ The fourth major production unit of AM 239 fol. might be included as an example at this point; it was certainly never planned by the fourteenth-century scribes but deemed a necessary completion to accommodate the user's needs some 300 years later. Surely the fourteenth-century scribes had certain motives to add material and gather it in one collection, but apart from the similarity of the texts, these motives remain unknown today.

The table of contents on fol. 1r indicates that the three oldest production units had come together by the beginning of the fifteenth century, which is why it is worth examining the binding of AM 239 fol. When taking a close look at the binding stations of the manuscript, three different

44 For the ONP dating, see <https://onp.ku.dk/onp/onp.php?m175>. Kristian Kålund dates AM 239 fol. in its entirety to the time between 1350 and 1400, cf. Kålund, *Katalog over Den Arnemagnæanske Håndskriftsamling*, 1:206.

45 Stefán Karlsson, *Sagas of Icelandic Bishops*, 21.

46 Kathryn M. Rudy, *Piety in Pieces: How Medieval Readers Customized Their Manuscripts* (Cambridge: Open Book Publishers, 2016), 9.

sewing hole sets can be distinguished: first, a set of v-shaped holes; second a notched cut, possibly from the time between the seventeenth and nineteenth century; and, third, a set of holes stabbed with a needle or awl from the middle of the twentieth century.⁴⁷ The v-shaped stations, presumably older than the other two sets, are also present in the seventeenth-century paper addition. This could, for example, mean that the paper gathering was added to an existing binding, using the same technique, or that the three fourteenth-century production units were unbound until the fourth PU was added, which would explain the substantial loss of leaves.

Loose gatherings were by no means uncommon during the Middle Ages. They could be wrapped in a limp binding of some sort, occasionally fixed to the wrapper with provisional fixtures.⁴⁸ There are several holes present in AM 239 fol. that could have been intended for quire tackets, an intermediate fixture meant to stabilize a gathering during its handling. Johann Peter Gumbert describes tackets as

[...] either loops of thread, or thin strips of parchment (often rolled tightly so as to resemble pieces of string), the ends of which are knitted [p. 301] or twisted together; they pass through holes that go, in the fold, through all the bifolia of the quire. They use two holes to make a loop, or one only and go over the end of the quire to close the loop.⁴⁹

Tackets could also be used for provisionally connecting quires to a limp binding.⁵⁰ In AM 239 fol., the holes appear mostly on the tail of leaves in the first five quires, in what corresponds to PU1.⁵¹ Vasaré Rastonis pointed out that some holes were potentially meant to be used in conjunction with a sewing station; however, given that the holes are irregular, it

47 I wish to thank Vasaré Rastonis, conservator at Stofnun Árna Magnússonar í íslenskum fræðum, for providing me with this information.

48 J. A. Szirmai, *The Archaeology of Medieval Bookbinding* (Aldershot; Brookfield, VT: Ashgate, 1999), 285.

49 Johann Peter Gumbert, "The Tacketed Quire: An Exercise in Comparative Codicology," *Scriptorium* 65 (2011): 300.

50 Szirmai, *The Archaeology of Medieval Bookbinding*, 287–90.

51 At the tail of fols. 9, 13, 14, 15, 29, 30 and 31, and at the tail and maybe the head of fols. 21, 22, 23 and 24.

remains unclear what the actual purpose of these holes was.⁵² Based on the sewing stations visible today, it is difficult to say for certain that PU₁, PU₂ and PU₃ were already physically bound together by the time the table of contents was added; yet, the fact that it lists texts in all three production units strongly indicates that they were preserved together, maybe as either an unbound or only provisionally bound manuscript to begin with.⁵³

As previously indicated, leaves have gone missing from the manuscript, and the current collation includes fifteen gatherings. Below, a reconstruction of a possible collation from around 1400 is portrayed (figure 2). This reconstruction is based on the premise that a quaternion, a gathering made of four bifolia, was the most common size in medieval Europe and that most of the intact gatherings used as the building blocks for the various medieval production units in AM 239 fol. are also quaternions.⁵⁴ The number of missing leaves in the reconstruction was calculated by comparing C. R. Unger's 1874 *Postola Sögur* edition and AM 239 fol., which needs approximately 70–72 percent of the lines of Unger's edition. In figure 2, gatherings that are still intact today are presented in yellow, while gatherings that were either reconstructed partly or as a whole are presented in pink. Arabic numbers represent the current foliation; likewise, the gatherings in the reconstruction are counted in Arabic numbers, in order to set them apart from the current collation. The reconstruction suggests that, in its state around 1400 when the ownership note and the table of contents were added, this composite manuscript counted over 150 leaves in twenty gatherings, meaning that AM 239 fol.'s possible original size is comparable to manuscripts such as AM 350 fol. (currently 157 leaves) or AM 226 fol. (currently 158 leaves).

Some irregularities are accounted for, such as the size of the first gath-

52 Personal correspondence from January 13, 2022.

53 Potentially, wear of the outermost bifolia of complete gatherings could indicate that the book was unbound for a while. A survey of these bifolia was, however, inconclusive: Some gatherings (e.g. III, IV, V and VII) show an outermost bifolium that is slightly glossier and darker in color than the bifolia they enclose. Other gatherings (e.g. VI, VIII, IX and X) show these characteristics on bifolia that lie in the middle of the quire.

54 G. S. Ivy, "The Bibliography of the Manuscript Book," in *The English Library Before 1700. Studies in Its History*, ed. Francis Wormald and C. E. Wright (London: Athlones Press, 1958), 39, and Elias Avery Lowe, ed., *Codices Latini Antiquiores. A Palaeographical Guide to Latin Manuscripts Prior to the Ninth Century. Lowe. Part 2 Great Britain and Ireland, Codices Latini Antiquiores 2* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1972), x.

ering, which is here presented as having contained seven leaves.⁵⁵ Further irregularities are quires 6 and 10, a binion and a tertion. Special attention should be paid to the reconstructed quires 11 and 12: In the current collation (figure 1), these two gatherings are bound as one quaternion (quire VII); however, based on the missing text, there seem to be six leaves missing between the bifolium fols. 38 and 45. At present, this lacuna is filled out by fols. 39–44, however, this collation cannot be the original: Fol. 38 ends in chapter 16 of *Jóns saga baptista* with “bera lostasemi með”.⁵⁶ The text on fol. 39 begins with “loknir oc birti” and belongs to chapter 27. The subsequent leaves build a textual continuum until the end of fol. 44, which ends in chapter 33 with “at hinn heilagi”. Given that fol. 45 begins in chapter 24 with “[sag]di marga okomna hluti”, it is safe to say that fols. 39–44 textually belong after fol. 45. After fol. 45, there is again a short lacuna, just as after fol. 44. It is sensible to assume that the outer most bifolium of the reconstructed gathering XII went missing. The paper gathering added in the seventeenth century between fols. 85 and 96 is made up of five bifolia. The text ends on line 17 on fol. 92r; the following three and a half leaves are blank. Given that there are 38 lines per page in PU₄ and that not a full eight leaves were used to replace the text, it might appear sensible to assume that the original gathering, which would have had a line count of approximately 30–32 lines per page, consisted of four bifolia (quire 17 in figure 2).

55 Irregular structures of the first (and last) gathering of a manuscript can be observed elsewhere, see e.g., the collation of GKS 1005 fol. (quire I: one bifolium and a singleton as the last leaf of the quire), or that of Holm Perg 34 4to (quire I: three bifolia and a singleton, whereby the singleton (fol. 2) is bound between fols. 1 and 3). In other cases, the first gathering is smaller than the following ones, e.g. in AM 61 fol. Here, the first gathering is a tertion, while those that follow tend to be quaternions.

56 Chapter division according to Unger, ed., *Postola Sögur*.

AM 239 fol. as exemplar

The composite nature of AM 239 fol. has considerable implications for one of its copies, namely SÁM 1. This manuscript is, as previously stated, written by the scribe H2, as well as two other unidentified scribes.⁵⁷ It contains a multitude of postulasögur, amongst others *Pétrs saga postula* (fols. 1v–27va30), *Andrés saga postula* (fols. 36v⁵⁸–39vb32) and *Tveggja postula saga Jóns ok Jakobs* (fols. 40r–81v). Although *Pétrs saga postula* and *Andrés saga postula* also occur in AM 239 fol., they apparently were not used as exemplar by H2. Despite the version of *Pétrs saga postula* found in SÁM 1 and AM 239 fol. being the same, namely “Pétrs saga postula I,” Ólafur Halldórsson asserts that the exemplar used in SÁM 1 is unknown, thus excluding the possibility that H2 copied it from leaves in AM 239 fol.⁵⁹ Ólafur does not expand on the textual relationship of the *Pétrs sögur* found in the two manuscripts further, but probably would have done so if it would have further strengthened the connection between them, and consequently the Helgafell-group. Other scholars working with this material are silent on the relationship of the two texts. It cannot be ruled out that both H2 and H3 used the same exemplar for *Pétrs saga postula*, but to dive deeper into any possible textual relation goes beyond the scope of this article.⁶⁰

The version of *Andrés saga postula* contained in SÁM 1 differs from AM 239 fol., meaning that AM 239 fol. did not serve as an exemplar for

57 Ólafur Halldórsson, ed., *Sögur úr Skarðsbók* (Reykjavík: Almenna bókafélagið, 1967), 11–12. The older scribal discussion by Desmond Slay only suggested two scribes. See Desmond Slay, ed., *Codex Scardensis*, Early Icelandic Manuscripts in Facsimile 2 (Copenhagen: Rosenkilde og Bagger, 1960), 10.

58 The rubric initiating the text is in the last line of fol. 36rb.

59 Ólafur Halldórsson, *Sögur úr Skarðsbók*, 27. Kirsten Wolf catalogues the version of *Pétrs saga postula* “Pétrs saga postula I,” and lists both AM 239 fol. and SÁM 1 as text witnesses for this version. See Kirsten Wolf, *The Legends of the Saints in Old Norse-Icelandic Prose*, Toronto Old Norse-Icelandic Studies 6 (Toronto; Buffalo: University of Toronto Press, 2013), 314–15. An earlier overview of saints’ lives in Old Norse literature lists both SÁM 1 and AM 239 fol. under *Pétrs saga postula* I; however, SÁM 1 is catalogued as I a and AM 239 fol. as I c, see Ole Widding et al., *The Lives of the Saints in Old Norse Prose. A Handlist*, Medieval Studies XXV (Toronto: Pontifical Institute of Mediaeval Studies, 1963), 329.

60 In the introduction to *Pétrs saga postula*, Unger categorizes both SÁM 1 and AM 239 fol. as manuscript group A, together with a third manuscript, AM 639 4to (Unger, *Postula Sögur*, p. xiv). Unger does not elaborate on the connection between these manuscripts. A source that might shed more light on the matter is a PhD dissertation from 1994, but unfortunately the thesis is not accessible (H. C. Carron, “A Critical Edition of *Pétrs Saga Postula* I, Based on the Codex Scardensis” (University of London, 1994).

this text.⁶¹ The version of *Andrés saga* found in AM 239 fol. is “Andrés saga postola I,” while the version in SÁM 1 is categorized as “Andrés saga postola III.” Both *Pétrs saga postula* and *Andrés saga postula* precede *Tveggja postula saga Jóns ok Jakobs* in SÁM 1, suggesting that they were probably written first. This, together with Ólafur’s hypothesis that different exemplars were used for these two texts, strengthens the assumption that PU₃ had not yet been added to the manuscript when H₂ copied *Tveggja postula saga Jóns ok Jakobs*. Whether PU₂, which contains *Jóns saga baptista*, was already part of the manuscript at that point, cannot be determined, as this saga was not included in SÁM 1. The likely possibility remains, though, that H₂ made use of AM 239 fol.’s first production unit before H₃ expanded its scope either for the first or the second time. H₂ copied *Tveggja postula saga Jóns ok Jakobs* also into another manuscript that is preserved as two fragments, AM 653 a 4to and JS fragm. 7. Due to the fragmentary state, it is impossible to assert whether the original manuscript included other texts, and if so, what they were.

Conclusion

As the presented analysis has shown, AM 239 fol. consists of three major production units from the second half of the fourteenth century. PU₁ extends from fol. 1 to fol. 35. PU₂ begins on fol. 36 and ends on fol. 52v15, with the elongated “Amen”. PU₃ begins on the same line as PU₂ ends, on fol. 52v15 with the “prologus” rubric. It extends from there until fol. 85 and again from fol. 95 to fol. 109. The two parts of PU₃ are separated by a later production unit, PU₄, which dates to the seventeenth century and supplies the lost end of *Pétrs saga postula*. Table 1 provides an overview of the major units and their production features.⁶² Note that both the end of *Tveggja postula saga Jóns ok Jakobs* (ca. six leaves) and the beginning of *Jóns saga baptista* (ca. one leaf) are missing.⁶³ This reconstruction does *not* indicate a quire boundary co-occurring with a text boundary, and, as is discussed above, it remains uncertain where exactly the original boundary between PU₁ and PU₂ was located.

61 Wolf, *The Legends of the Saints in Old Norse-Icelandic Prose*, 30.

62 A more detailed version of this table can also be found on the Helgafell-project website: <https://hirslan.arnastofnun.is/>.

63 These defects are marked with * in the table.

PU	Quire no.	Quire size	Lacunae	Writing supp.	Mise-en-page	Pricking/ruling	Texts/contents	Script	Illumination	Ink main text	Rubrics
PU ₁	1 (1–4)	2 bifolia	5 leaves missing	Vellum	1 column: 32–33 lines (except f. 2r: 28 lines)	Slit-like pricking marks	1v–35v Tveggja postula saga Jóns ok Jakobs*	H1 (ff. 1v–35v): Gothic textualis with influences of Gothic cursive (except 2r6–7: Unknown scribe)	Illuminated initials: dark red, turquoise, white	Black	No rubrics, two versals highlighted in red (f. 33v)
	2 (5–12)	4 bifolia	–								
	3 (13–20)	4 bifolia	20 leaves missing								
	4 (21–28)	4 bifolia	–								
	5 (29–34)	3 bifolia	2 leaves missing								
	35	1 sgl	7 leaves missing								
PU ₂	6 (36–37)	2 sgl	4 leaves missing	Vellum	1 column: 30–35 lines	Slit-like and round pricking marks	36r–52v:15 Jóns saga baptista*	H3; Gothic textualis with influences of Gothic cursive	Illuminated initials; dark red, turquoise	Black	Rubrics in dark red
	7 (38–45)	4 bifolia	6 +2 leaves missing								
	8 (46–53)	4 bifolia	–								
PU ₃	9 (54–61)	4 bifolia	–	Vellum	1 column: 30–32 lines	Slit-like pricking marks	52v:15–95v Péturs saga postula	H3; Gothic textualis with influences of Gothic cursive	Illuminated initials; dark red, turquoise, dark green, yellow	Brown-black	Rubrics in dark red and turquoise (fol. 64r)
	10 (62–69)	4 bifolia									
	11 (70–77)	4 bifolia									
	12 (78–85)	4 bifolia									
PU ₄	13 (86–95)	5 bifolia	Later replacem.	Paper	1 column: 38 lines	None	Magnús Jónsson: cursive	None	Brown	None	
PU ₃	14 (96–103)	4 bifolia	–	Vellum	One column: 29–40 lines	Slit-like pricking marks	96r–101v Andrés saga postula	H3; Gothic textualis with influences of Gothic cursive	Illuminated initials; dark red, turquoise, dark green, yellow	Black	Rubrics in dark red
	15 (104–109)	3 bifolia	1 leaf missing				101v–109v Viðræður Gregoriusar				

Table 1: Major production units contained in AM 239 fol. in its present form. Thin lines indicate a boundary between gatherings, texts or scribes; thick lines indicate a boundary between production units.

The composite structure of AM 239 fol. presented in this article offers a possible explanation for the difference between exemplars used for SÁM 1. It thus highlights the importance of a deeper understanding of the genesis of a codex, obtained through the identification of production units, and its relevance for related fields such as literary studies as well as the interpretation of the nature of other related manuscripts. Drechsler has claimed that the structure of AM 239 fol. suggests that it was not unusual to produce composite manuscripts at the Augustinian house of Helgafell.⁶⁴ While this article shows that AM 239 fol. contains three production units from the late fourteenth century and thus highlights the compositeness of the manuscript, it is not possible to verify that all parts were, in fact, produced at Helgafell. Furthermore, the relationship between PU2 and PU3 does not appear to be the product of meticulous planning, but rather of convenience. Still, the fact that both of these units were written by the same scribe might point towards a continuity in the personal and perhaps even spacial production of at least PU2 and PU3, not consecutively, but as a continuation of a compilatory work. The investigation of a potential connection between scribes H1 and H3 is dependent on the relationship between PU1 and PU2. Yet, due to the likely change of illuminator and the sudden presence of rubrics, it is unlikely that these units are the result of close scribal cooperation.

This article has shown that AM 239 fol. in its present form grew over time. The manuscript that started with *Tveggja postula saga Jóns ok Jakobs*, written by H1, was extended twice with texts written by H3, first *Jóns saga baptista* and, later, *Pétrs saga postula*, *Andrés saga postula* and *Viðræður Gregoríusar*. The composite structure of AM 239 fol. strongly suggests that the manuscript's users deemed it appropriate or necessary to combine and add content. The perception of local manuscripts as "interactive"⁶⁵ objects open to adjustments and change is akin to their Insular and Continental European contemporaries and represents a significant aspect of the history of Icelandic book production. Whether or not all its medieval production units were written at Helgafell, the ownership note indicates that the book was most likely housed there, and its content and the two surviving copies of *Tveggja postula saga Jóns ok Jakobs* suggest that it found much use there.

64 Drechsler, *Illuminated Manuscript Production*, 117.

65 Rudy, *Piety in Pieces*, 10. illuminators, book binders

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AM 156 4to

SÁM 1

Den Arnamagnæanske Samling, Copenhagen

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AM 226 fol.

Landsbókasafn Íslands – Háskólabókasafn, Reykjavík

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SUMMARY

The Genesis of a Composite. The Codicology of AM 239 fol.

Keywords: Codicology, medieval manuscript production, Helgafell, AM 239 fol., exemplar

Manuscript AM 239 fol. is central for the so-called Helgafell-manuscripts, as it connects the group of some sixteen manuscripts and fragments to the Augustinian house of Helgafell on Snæfellsnes in west Iceland. The manuscript's significance lies not only in the ownership note on fol. 1r, but also in the fact that it was used as an exemplar for two manuscripts, AM 653 a 4to (with JS fragm. 7) and SÁM 1. The codicological structure of the manuscript is complex and was recently described as a composite consisting of two late-fourteenth-century production units. This article revisits the codicology of AM 239 fol; it shows there are, in

fact, three production units from that period and explores the ways in which these relate to one another. The genesis of the manuscript is important to keep in mind when discussing AM 239 fol. as exemplar, as it offers a possible explanation as to why only one of its texts was copied into SÁM 1.

ÁGRIP

Ferill samsetts handrits. Efnisleg einkenni handritsins AM 239 fol.

Efnisorð: efnisleg handritafræði, bókagerð á miðöldum, Helgafell, AM 239 fol., forrit

Handritið AM 239 fol. skipar sérstakan sess í hópi svokallaðra Helgafells-handrita af því að það tengir þau, þ.e.a.s. um það bil 16 handrit og handritabrot, við klaustrið á Helgafelli á Snæfellsnesi. En handritið er ekki einungis athyglisvert vegna upplýsinga um eiganda sem er að finna á bl. 1r heldur líka vegna þess að það er forrit tveggja annarra handrita, AM 653 a 4to (ásamt JS fragm. 7) og SÁM 1. Efnisleg gerð handritsins er margþætt og samkvæmt nýlegri greiningu er það sett saman úr tveimur framleiðslueiningum frá seinni hluta fjórtándu aldar. Í þessari grein eru efnisleg einkenni AM 239 fol. rakin og sýnt fram á að handritið inniheldur ekki tvær heldur þrjár framleiðslueiningar frá þessu tímabili; enn fremur er sýnt hvernig þessar einingar tengjast. Tilurð handritsins skiptir máli þegar hlutverk AM 239 fol. sem forrits er haft í huga, ekki síst af því að hún býður upp á hugsanlega skýringu á því hvers vegna einungis einn texti í því var skrifaður upp í SÁM 1.

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